

Mashed potatoes, and purred peas and chicken. Young mother, Amber manages to gather tiny portions of all three foods into a tiny plastic spoon and places it near her baby girl's mouth. The child pulls its head back but focuses her eyes on her mom unsure of what's in front of her.

"Open wide, Joy." Amber says and separates her top lip from her bottom. "Aaah."

The child repeats the actions of her mother and receives the food with a sour expression after swishing it around in her mouth. Amber laughs and uses the tip of her index finger to wipe away smeared peas at the corner of the baby girl's mouth.

"Look." She licks away the food from her finger. "It's not so bad."

Amber gathers another soup of food onto the spoon and hears the doorbell ring just before pressing the helping up to her baby's lips. She calls out for her husband who is sitting in the living room watching the nighttime news broadcast and severs Joy the final helping of her meal.

"Honey."

Amber snaps her head towards the voice of her husband, Clayton. He stands at the kitchen entry way with one eyebrow raised high on his forehead. His eyes are wide, and his peachy complexion has gone pale.

Feeling a wave of anxiety Amber asks, "What's wrong?"

"It's for you." Clayton says and uses this thumb to point towards the front entrance.

"Three men in uniforms. They said it's urgent that they speak to you."

"Me?" Amber stands from the kitchen table and walks over to the sink. Her hands are trembling as she prepares a warm bottle for baby Joy and utilizes the time to allow her mind to

run with frenzy on bad scenarios for the cause of the late-night visit. Men in uniforms could only mean two things. Someone has died, and they needed her to identify their body or her husband possibly committed a crime and the men, presuming to be investigators have come to ask her questions about his whereabouts on a certain day. As crazy as it may seem, it is the only reason for the suited visit. At least the only thing Amber's mind could drum up.

She examines her husband face as she hands him a warm bottle. His looks uneasy as he keeps his eyes away from her, downward towards the floor and takes the bottle. The doorbell rings again and snaps Amber from her observation.

"After she's done with the bottle, put her to bed." Amber orders and leaves the kitchen. She quickly takes long strides through the living room. Joy's toys scattered across the carpeted floor. Amber steps on a Lego and swears under her breath. The doorbell rings again indicating the visitors are in a haste.

"I'm coming!" She growls, twist the brass doorknob, and swings the entrance open to find exactly what her husband said. Two men stand in camouflage uniforms and one in a black suit in front of them. He steps forward, closer to the screen door and holds up a badge unfamiliar to Amber.

"Amber Wilson?" He says. She tightens her lips together and nods her head.

"I'm Ryan Gibbs. OGI agent for National Aeronautics and Space Administration. My apologies for the intrusion this evening, but we are here on important affairs and need to speak to you immediately on a classified subject. May we come in?"

Hesitant for a moment, Amber sighs and reaches for the screen door to remove the lock. She thinks of what was said to her as the three men let themselves into her tiny apartment.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration? She ponders for the acronym. The men stop in front of the television. Their eyes scan the clutter in the crunched space. Toys are everywhere on every surface; a basket of folded clothing are on a sofa and there's a bag of garbage near the entrance that's causing a rotting smell to fill the condensed air.

“Please.” Amber moves that laundry and gestures the gentleman towards a worn out floral patterned sofa. “Have a seat. Sorry for the mess. I was just about to put my daughter to bed and clean up.”

She makes a mental note to scold Clayton about the trash she told him to take out an hour ago.

“No need for an apology, ma'am.” Gibbs says and remains standing.

Amber picks up one single large Lego from the ground feeling a sharp pain at the side of her abdomen. She rests her hand on the top of her protruding stomach when a realization suddenly hits her from her mind and travels down to her mouth. “You work for NASA.”

Gibbs nods. “Correct. Is there anyone else here besides the male who answered the door?”

“No.”

“To keep this information under confidentiality, I ask that he must exist this establishment until our meeting is over.”

Amber feels her eyes widen. She takes a step backward near the bedroom entrance and calls for Clayton. He comes out moments later holding baby Joy.

“She just refuses to go to sleep” He chuckles while bouncing the baby lightly on his waist. Amber stares at the three men before her trying to figure out the meaning of their coming or if she had any affiliation with NASA at all. The only thing that comes to her mind is visiting a planetarium as a child in a school trip, but that can’t be the reason.

Clayton lightly nudges Amber’s arm to get her attention. “What’s wrong?”

“The officers would like for you to leave for a moment.” Amber mutters.

Clayton scoffs and sends out a chuckle. Unresponsive to his sudden amusement, Amber locks her eyes onto him and lowers her eyebrows. The severity of the situation is now made aware to her husband and he moves closer to his wife to whisper, “What’s going on?”

Before Amber can respond, Gibbs shows his badge and introduces himself to Clayton.

“Sir. This is will only be a moment. We are here to gather important information from Mrs. Wilson. You may stand outside. One of my men will attend you while the other stands near the entrance.”

“Um...Alright then.” Clayton hands Joy over to her mother and whispers. “Don’t hesitate to scream if something goes wrong.”

Amber nods her head and watches as her husband exits the apartment. The door is shut behind him and she is left alone with Gibbs. He sits on the sofa with a long, exhausted exhale and this time, holds out his hand as a gesture for Amber to sit beside him.

She places Joy on a mat on the floor near her toys, turns down the television, and takes a seat.

“We normally don’t expect people at this time of night.” She begins to speak with a nervous giggle. “We are supposed to be heading to bed.”

“Well it’s a good thing I caught you while you were awake.” Gibbs reaches into his jacket and pulls out two photos of different sized. One wallet and the other five by eight. He places them on a clear space at the center of the coffee table in front of Amber. She leans over slightly not to push her chest against her stomach and examines the two photos of two boys. They are of one individual. The wallet sized photo, he around the age of nine. He has a wide smile that shows off crooked front teeth and sports a blond bowl-shaped haircut. The other in teen years, hair combed back, his blond hair changed two shades darker and the naïve smile has turned stern. Amber can tell it’s the same boy from his hazel eyes.

“Wait a minute.” She shifts her focus from his younger picture to him in his teen years and suddenly senses something within her spirit. Her heart thuds hard against her chest and the forming childing inside of her turns over in different positions. She looked into those eyes once before.

“Do you happen to know of this young man?” Gibbs says. He notices her reaction upon seeing the photos. She recognized him.

“Yeah. I remember him.” Amber points to the photo of the teen. “His name was Trent Johnson. We grew up together.”

“Do you have any more information on him?”

Amber sighs and thinks back eleven years back into her life when everything seemed to easy despite being a teen going through the hardships of young adult hood. She tells Gibbs of the

relationship she once had with the young man in the photo. They had been childhood friends that eventually deepened as time passed.

“We dated in high school. Not long, though. He left.”

Gibbs scoops up the two photos and stuffs them back into his pocket. “Do you know where he went?”

“He just disappeared around sophomore year. His family never told me where he went.” Amber says and looks back at the agent.

Gibbs sent out an exaggerated huff and stands to his feet. He focuses his eyes on the sergeant standing near the door and gives one nob of his head. Amber stands quickly at the sight of the unfamiliar gesture and picks up Joy from the ground.

“We will be needing you to come with us, Mrs. Wilson.”

“What!” Amber takes a step back from Gibbs. “Why? Did something happen to him?”

The sergeant opens the door and allows Clayton and his partner to step inside.

“You have been requested by Johnson. You need to come with us immediately. He is expecting you at the headquarters upon arrival from the return of his mission.”

Clayton doesn't protest to Ambers sudden departure. He places his hand on her stomach and leans his head against hers. He can feel her body trembling, aware of her fear. Its been years since she had left the house alone and being with child only heightened that fear of traveling without him. Moments before, Gibbs informed her of their destination. Straight to Washington

DC by an aircraft ready for their takeoff. She was to meet with her former lover after thirteen years of being absent.

Clayton presses his forehead against hers and whispers, “Where are you going?”

“I can’t tell you that.” Amber responds and glances to her right. Gibbs and the two uniformed men are standing near the door and listening carefully. Everything was to remain confidential. The consequences told were vague but threatening to her and her family. “I shouldn’t be gone for long.”

“You don’t have to go if you don’t want to-

“I don’t.” Amber begins to weep. “But they need more answers.”

“Mrs. Wilson.” Gibbs calls out. “We must leave now.”

Amber wraps her arms around Clayton. He tightens his grip around her shoulders and whispers he loves her. She then gives Joy a kiss farewell on her plump cheek and slips on a coat hanging on a rack near the door.

Nighttime has fallen on Lexington, South Carolina. Brightened by street lamps, a few people walk the blocks to enjoy the peace. Some are with their dogs while other take the quiet time to jog through the lightly crowded blocks.

Amber is placed in an unmarked black SUV accompanied by Gibbs and the two sergeants. Once the car begins to pull in motion, Amber senses her fear boiling to a rim. She wraps her jacket tighter around her body and forces her mind to relax.

Nothing is said for the entire forty-minute drive except for Amber’s thoughts screaming inside of her mind and heavy breathing. Trent. That bastard. What could he want with her at this

time of night and for a better question, where had he been for over the past thirteen years? What has he been doing that would involve important people and confidentiality over his information? Where did he travel to that would involve Nasa?

She is jarred out of her thoughts by the sight of a commercial airplane taking off at full speed into the air. Her eyes widen, and her breath is instantly shorted by the realization that they would be shifting from land to air to reach their destination faster.

She snatches ahold of Gibbs who is seated beside her and rips at his jacket. "I-I'm scared of heights."

"You won't be in the air too long, Mrs. Wilson."

"You know you're asking me to do a lot!" Amber screams. "Why do you need me. Why did you have to come to my home and disrupt my life. Why couldn't you have just been absent for the rest of my life!"

"Mrs. Wilson!" Gibbs shouts and pulls himself free from Amber's grasp. He takes her hand and places it between his. Her breathing has sped up as well as the tears running down the sides of her face through shut eyes. The mother is terrified. He could see and feel it through her quaking body. "I understand how you're feeling at this moment and I must say you're not the only one feeling the complexity of this situation. I only ask-beg that you to stay calm right now. For yourself and your child."

Amber opens her eyes. In the mix of memories, worries of what's to come, and fear of heights, she had forgotten the stress that is being laid on her unborn baby.

Taking back her hand, Amber inhales a deep breath, nods her head, and opens her eyes. The group approaches the aircraft outside in a private section of the terminal. The whooshing sounds of the blades rings alarms to Amber as she is confronting acrophobia. How she wishes to possess the abilities to freeze time or rewind it to the moment the doorbell rang. She would have told her husband not to answer it.

The uniformed men along with Gibbs help her inside and strap her down to a chair comfortably. Feeling her baby rotate in positions, Amber places her hands on her stomach and takes in another inhale. She feels every movement of the helicopter as if she has merged with its metal composition. The launch at first is rocky; the blades fright against light fall breezes, but once the aircraft reaches the right altitude, the glide becomes smooth.

Don't look out the windows. Don't look out the windows. Don't look out the windows.

Sitting across from her, Gibbs grunts at the sight of Amber's face. Agape eyes that are blank and locked onto straightforward space, tight jaw as if she is either holding back from regurgitating or shrieking, and a firm clench around her belly. He should have given her relaxants. Unfortunately, she is pregnant.

"Everything alright, Mrs. Wilson?" He questions. Speaking to her is the best medication at this point.

"Yes." Amber says with sharpness in her voice. "Just trying not to look out of the windows."

Gibbs laughs. "I can see that. Why don't you tell me about yourself? How old are you? Um...have you lived in Carolina all of your life?"

Her eyes have gone dry after being open for an extended amount of time. Amber blinks and lets out another exhale and repositions herself in the hard chair. “There’s isn’t too much to tell you of who I am. I’m twenty-seven and yes, I was born and raised in South Carolina. What you came into *is* me, I guess.”

“And that is?”

“I’m just a wife and a mother trying to do best for her family.”

“Can you tell me how you are feeling now?” Gibbs asks and upon reaction to his question he sees Ambers entire constricted body loosen. She keeps her gaze focused on him and bites down on her bottom lip.

“Scared.” She mumbles. “Beyond scared.”

“Of flying?”

Amber chuckles, finally. Like music to Gibbs ears. The tension she projected has diminished. When a mother is ill, everyone is ill, but the sound of her laughter draws ease to everyone listening in on their conversation though their headsets.

“I’m already up in the air. That fear is gone, but what’s to come.” Amber shrugs. “I’m terrified.”

“Why?”

“You’re asking, well...forcing me to see an ex. My first love. How would you feel looking into the eyes of someone who broke your heart without reason? Like I said before, Trent just disappeared. He promised me so much things before he left. He promised he would take me to places he read about in books. He liked to read a lot about the world. He wanted us to

experience what was in it. I loved him from the day I met him playing explorer in the playground. I knew he loved me from that day on because I was the only kid who played with him. So...Why am I afraid?" Amber pauses.

Gibbs leans forward in his seat. Amber looks down at her stomach, rubs the tip of her belly button, and looks back at the man before her.

"I have to open a wound that took forever to heal, Gibbs." She says. "Those words I spoke in the car before leaving, they were meant for Trent."

"There's no feeling of happiness?" Gibbs asks.

Amber shakes her head. "I have a bad feeling about this and I don't want my family, or anyone hurt in the process."

The craft begins to descend. Feeling completely tranquil after venting, Amber swallows down the remainder of acrophobia and peers out of the window just before the copter touches the ground. She sees a large white and tan building and on the center of the highest wall of the structure, the NASA logo is illuminated by the exterior lighting. There are only a few interior lights on. Probably late-night workers, Amber assumes. She turns her focus on two shuttles sitting in an open field and releases an awed gasp. Such fascination made by the hands of man to defy to limitation of humanity. The helicopter lands only a few feet from them and she is assisted out of the craft with her eyes unmoved from the space transports.

"Oh Trent." Amber whispers to herself. "What have you gotten yourself into?"

Gibbs takes out a cellphone from his jacket pocket and pushes one button on the screen. He places his free hand on Amber's back and lightly pushes her in the direction of the two

sergeants. They are already walking near the back of the building. As she follows behind them with Gibbs at her side, Amber notices seven more unmarked black vehicles. Her short-lived calm demeanor is swept away by returning anxiety.

“Inspector Gibbs. I am returning with the first member of the calling.” Gibbs states over the phone. “We are heading near the west sector.”

Once Gibbs ends the short call, Amber request to get in touch with her husband. She is almost sure he is worried sick about her. Before leaving she was ordered only to bring her state id and nothing else. Not even a snack to eat in case her forming baby were to go on a hunger fit on the way. Clayton did object against the demand that she leaves her cellphone behind, but it was to no effect. Classified information had already been distributed. There was nothing else for Amber to do, but to move forward with further demands for the sake of her family.

“Not right now, Mrs. Wilson.” Gibbs says. He punches in a combination on a keypad and unbolts a white door. He opens it for her. “I assure you though. You will be back home to your family by morning.”

His words don’t guarantee nothing to Amber. He was already placing her family into a bind. Who know what Clayton could be doing while she is away. With no means of contact, he is probably freaking out and restless.

Amber steps into the building and gets a punch of the freezing temperatures. Again, Gibbs softly pushes her back to follow to the two sergeants down several long white corridors. She glances at pictures hanging on the walls of planets, stars, and nebulas taken by Hubble, the space telescope. They are then lead to an elevator where another gentleman in a camouflage uniform presents Gibbs with a vanilla folder and accesses the doors to slide open apart. Amber,

the two sergeants, and Gibbs step inside. As the door shuts, she exhales and gives one last thought of her family as if she is a prisoner on her way to execution more than an escorted visitor. There is an inclination of lowered force as the elevator moves downward.

“I would like to take this time to share more details on the matter at hand, Mrs. Wilson.” Gibbs says and opens the folder. “I will try to make this as simple as possible. Thirteen years ago, NASA successfully launched five humans into space and landed them on Mars. It was meant to be only a two-year assignment. Trent was the youngest of the group. You mentioned he had just left during the middle of high school?”

Amber nods her head at the inquiry.

“That final day you saw him was the beginning of his training.” Gibbs says. Amber huffs and plays the memory back of her last encounter with Trent. It was at night and they had decided to sneak out of their parents’ house to meet in the same schoolyard where they first played explores. Under the blanket of the night, he was pointing out constellations. Orion’s belt, the little dipper, and star clusters. It was a cold evening, so he drew her closer to his body and rested his chin on the top of her head.

“Promise to always be with me.” He said.

“I promise.” She answered.

Amber is brought back to the present by a light tap on her shoulder.

Gibbs checks her eyes to see if she has fully come back to reality before continuing.

“The astronauts had direct orders. Gain as much information as possible on the plant from its orbit to its surface, test if vegetational life was possible and then return with samples. Unfortunately, five weeks into the mission, we lost all contact with the rocketeers.”

Amber is handed a photo and takes a good look at five individuals. Three males, two of them are appeared to be in their later years, while Trent looks the youngest, in his late teens. He looks the same as she remembers before he disappeared. Astonished, Amber hands back the photo after only glancing at two young women. He really did travel. Not the world however, but space.

“Two days ago, NASA picked up a signal from one of its satellites. It was a faint voice only saying ‘hello’.” Gibbs continues. “The transmission was fuzzy, and it took out most of the system’s hard drive during its take on the signal. Seems whatever they called from was of too much power for our technology to handle, but we were able to track where the voice came from.”

“Where was it?” Amber questions and feels the elevator come to a halt. The doors open revealing their destination to be an underground tunnel lit by only a few distant lights. She moves with everyone else, however slow with caution. The uneasy feeling within her has strengthened at the sights of the area she had only seen in horror movies. Victims being chased by their killers only to be caught quickly and killed.

“We are almost there.” Gibbs says sensing a change in her disposition. “We traced the message back to the same location where the shuttle had landed on Mars. It was a male’s voice. We don’t know which, but it was from one of the missioners.”

The end of the tunnel is finally being approached. Amber releases a sigh of relief at the sight of a rusted door. Under the crack there is a bright light. Gibbs uses one knuckle to knock lightly on the entrance and it is opened by a man in regular clothing. He has a look of anticipation on his peachy face and shakes Gibb's hand.

“Well done.” He pronounces and takes Amber by the hand. “We have the others waiting in the viewing room. *They* shall be here shortly. The craft has just entered the atmosphere.” The male pauses his words and grins with puffed cheeks like he is ready to burst in excitement. “It's an honor to witness this event that will change the perspective of humanity. We did it!”

Amber looks at Gibbs and raises one eyebrow while feeling the tug of the male on her hand.

“Well. This is where I leave you, Mrs. Wilson.” Gibbs places a hand on her shoulder and smiles. “Congratulations. You must have been someone of importance to be called. It was an honor to escort you here.”

“Is it too late to go back home?”

The male rips at Ambers arm and nearly drags her down the hallway. She reaches out for Gibbs in hopes he will save her, but he only waves and steps out of her sights.

The male goes on about speaking, but not to her directly. He mumbles words to himself, giddily leaps while snapping his fingers and begins to whistle. Amber wishes she had the strength to pull away and make a run for it, but with her belly and sore feet she would only make about a foot before becoming exhausted. It is a task she had no option but to complete since she allowed herself to be neck deep into the situation.

She is soon brought to a room and pushed inside by the male. He gives her a thumb up and slams the door behind him. There's a stillness in the atmosphere even though there are five other people with her. No seats for her to rest, Amber walks over to the corner of the white painted room and leans against the wall. Her presence has attracted the attention of the others. Someone ponders with harsh speculation if she-a simple pregnant woman-is the last person they have been waiting for. Amber looks up from her stomach to examine the others. Two females who introduce themselves as a doctor and a teacher from Harvard, and three males, a scientist, researcher in astrophysics, and the president of the United States.

“Oh my, God.” Amber says in an exhale and rushes over the leader of the country. He smirks and raises his nose into the air. “Sir, it's an honor to meet you.”

“Thank you.” He says and shakes Amber's hand. “What is the means of your appearance here? Are you someone of a benefit to our country?”

“No.” Amber laughs. “I knew one of the astronauts. A...Um...Close friend from years ago.”

“Oh. I see. Well if you were called, then you were called for a reason. Let's try to get as much from them as possible during our exchange of information. It is said that they have exceed past human limitations and technology. We need everything that's going to be offered.”

Amber nods her head. What information could they want from her? She is not like the others with superb professions that will make a difference to the world. She is, like someone said, just a mother only contributing another life on earth. What does Trent want and why? It couldn't be just to see how she was doing after all these years. Amber chuckles at that thought. She had run across several of her high school peers still living in the town and never said

anything to them. She doesn't care about their lives so why even bother asking. But, why would Trent care about hers if he had been on one of the biggest missions and accomplishments of mankind. Just to come back and say hello would be ridiculous. Probably upsetting after discovering she had broken her part of the promise.

Amber wraps her arms around her stomach as her mind shifts from wonderous thoughts of dread. Her heart, picking up in beats begins to ache as a thought rings throughout her mind. She broke her promise to her first love.

“Stand at attention.” A voice suddenly blares into the room through a hidden speaker. “Our missioners have arrived. Once again, we praise this moment, a mark in history you are witnessing. Only speak in directed to. If not. Remain silent.”

The voice disappears. Amber fixes her gaze to a window in the room. There she sees the adjacent room made up like the one they all stand in. Simple white with bright overhead lights. She takes quivering steps backward while the others move forward except the president. Only deep breaths are heard though the muteness. In the adjacent room, the door is opened, and everyone releases their inhalation.

Only one steps in first. Large. Reaching about seven feet tall if it were to stand up straight. Instead the person underneath a blue skintight suit that flashes several lights of different colors is hunched slightly over. Inside of a helmet, the face is hidden behind a tinted screen. Amber can hear it's breathing through the screen and as it turns around and beckons the others to come inside she sees strapped behind its back is a small tank with tubes connect it to the helmet.

“They can't breathe *here*?” The president chuckles. “They are human, right?”

The leader of the group twists its body and faces its head towards the president releasing a powerful threatening sensation that penetrates through the window. Everyone takes a petrified gasp.

“We were told not to speak!” The Harvard professor shouts.

The door is left open and the others step inside one by one. They all stand, but hunched over, wearing the same suits and breathing from the same tanks. Each ranging in different body heights, they gather in a straight horizontal line, side by side. Amber’s eyes move from each being as she tries to make out which one could be Trent. They don’t make any movement, but it is made heedful that they are examining everyone on the other side of the glass.

The photo Gibbs handed Amber to view. It was a group shot of the astronauts before their launch. Trent was standing in between the two women and he was a couple of inches taller than then, but shorter than the two other males. Through narrow eyes, Amber measures each of them, but it is too hard to determine who was taller than who since they are hunched over.

She takes one step closer to get a better look of their faces behind their helmets.

To the far right at the end of the line, one raises its hand, points directly in her direction, and just waves. The teacher and researcher of Astrophysics gulp and gawk at Amber while the others stand in sheer bewilderment, unable to tear their eyes away from the incredulity before them.

Too terrified, Amber doesn’t move. It has recognized her and simply waved, but it’s a challenge to set her fear aside of the known that has been altered into the unknown. That wave could mean anything. It’s impossible for missioners to sustain their lives on a planet not made for them or at least that’s what she thinks. An assumption forms in her mind. Can it be an

extraterrestrial that has learned basic human language, masked itself under a hypnotic suit and manipulated a male voice just to get into the world safely?

The missionary waves again.

“Go up there, why don’t you!” The scientist demands. She shakes her head no. He then stomps toward Amber after seeing she doesn’t move and grabs onto her jacket. She releases a shriek and fights while he pulls her towards the window until the teacher and the doctor lounge themselves at him.

“Let her go!” They rip at the sleeve of his shirt and jerk at his waist to tear him away from Amber.

“It wants her! Can’t you see? It keeps waving. Let her go see what they want.” The scientist releases his grip on her Amber. She loses her balance and trips onto the floor. The women check to see if she is alright. Remorseful for possibly hurting her, the scientist places his hand over his mouth turns back to face the window.

The one that pointed at Amber has moves from the line and stands close to the glass with its head tilted at her aggressor. The flashing of lights on its suit twinkle on and off speedily and the sound of its breathing has heightened.

“It moved closer.” The studier of astrophysics whispers. He shifts his eyes to Amber but keeps his head still. “Please. Go see what he wants.”

Amber gathers herself back to her feet with the help of the two women and although there is little physical indication for it, her heightened maternal instincts precept hostility from the

missioner. Taking slow steps towards the glass, she holds herself tight. The beating of her heart is felt through her sweater and balls of nervous sweat form around her hair line.

Up against the glass, the missioner moves its head from side to side, but stops when she is close. If this is her friend, he has grown over the years. From a distance in the room, he appeared smaller, but closer perspective reveals that he has grown in height and weight.

“Trent.” Amber murmurs. She strengthens her vision to get a clearer look behind the helmet’s tinted glass. Expanded beyond normality, there is a pair of hazel eyes that hold shining stars. A cord in Amber’s chest is struck as she remembers them as the ones she once gazed into and found the charming soul of her dearest love, but they are wider, possibly due to the gravitational field on the planet or something completely different. A Martian taking the form of someone recognizable? She questions, “Is it really you?”

The assumed Trent raises its hand and places it against the glass. Amber raises hers as well but instantaneously lowers it to her turning stomach to ease her restless child. It’s moving now more than usual, sending kicks to the center of her abdomen, spine, and pelvis like it is purposely causing pain to its mother on purpose. Amber pats the top of her belly and blows air through a small space between her teeth and pouted lips.

“It’s ok. He’s a friend.”

Amber lifts her eyes and sees that Trent has moved his hand on the glass to the location of her stomach and points his finger. Although there is a solid mass blocking the two, the child inside of her stomach reacts negatively to the non-sensational touch and kicks once more at Amber’s bladder. She takes a step back in agony and wraps her coat tighter around her entire body in hopes the new warmth will sooth her baby. Trent takes a step back and lowers his head.

“Trent?” Amber steps up to the glass once more and places her hand against the glass.

“It’s me. Amber.”

He doesn’t respond with any movement.

“What’s wrong, Trent.”

“I think you just upset him.” The president says.

“What! No.” Amber slams her palm against the glass. “What was I supposed to do while you were away?” She growls. “You just left me without ever telling me where you were going. I didn’t know if you were ever going to come back for me?”

Taking steps backward, Trent joins with the others in the formation. He keeps his head lowered and the missionary standing beside him places its hand on his back with lights taps to briefly console him. Again, Amber slams her hand on the glass and feels her body rise with discontent. From the unexpectant visit to the arrival at the center, she had been in constant distress for this moment and to be ignored and rejected in the reunion based off her current living standard was outlandish.

Amber continues to pound her hand against the window. The gold plate of her ring creates a loud clank following each forceful connection between her hand and the glass until she balls up her fist, sends one blow, and demands for Trent to step forward and say something.

“Come here! Don’t bring me all this way to say nothing.”

The missionary at the far end lift its hand into the air. “I have seen enough!” A deep male voice resounds from underneath its helmet. “I know what will come if I view more. Time has exceeded, yet diminutive engagements have been done to the residing earthlings. They continue

to contest and ceasing to bring these disputes into resolution with tranquility, they add further tension to the strife by following on their rudimentary make-up. Trent, I am sorry for your *friend*, but she cannot be spared. She is bearing and possess the virus that plagues this world. Predications has been concluded as accurate. They have not changed and will never and the possibility of their relocation in the forthcoming has been made aware based upon our presence. We cannot chance antagonism in the territory and disrupt the process of the new evolution.”

“So. It is decided that we commence the assignment?” Speaks the voice of a woman.
“For the sake of our world, theirs must be stopped.”

Amber stops banging her fist and presses her hand against the glass. Trent’s head remains unmoved, but he raises his arm up to his chest as with the others and presses one of the flashing lights on his suit. With a blink of an eye, every missioner vanishes.

Feedback from the hidden intercom sounds off and the same voice heard telling them to be quiet has returned with the question of the missioners. Where did they go? The president, astrophysical student, doctor, teacher, and scientist stay at pause searching the empty space while Amber dwells on the deepest realization of her entire life. Trent came back to take her home before destroying the planet. He wanted to see her to save her.

